US EPA RECORDS CENTER REGION 5
443180

United States
Environmental Protection
Agency

Office of Public Affairs
Region 5
77 West Jackson Boulevard
Chicago, Illinois 60604-3590

Illinois, Indiana
Michigan, Minnesota
Ohio, Wisconsin

U.S. EPA Expects to Issue Notice Letter to Lockformer Company

June 2001

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) has decided to initiate procedures to begin the cleanup of hazardous material released at the Lockformer Company at 711 Ogden Avenue in Lisle, Illinois. U.S. EPA expects to soon issue a notice letter to parties considered potentially responsible for contamination at the site (referred to as PRPs) in connection with the release of a hazardous substance at the Lockformer facility. This notice letter invites the PRPs to negotiate a cleanup plan with U.S. EPA.

U.S. EPA issues Superfund notice letters when it determines that there has been a release, or that there is the substantial threat of a release of hazardous substances into the environment that may pose an imminent and substantial endangerment to human health. Notice letters are issued to potentially responsible parties, including owners and operators, and former owners and operators, of the site where the release or threat of release exists.

Site Background

The Lockformer Company has been participating in the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency's (IEPA) Voluntary Site Remediation (Cleanup) Program since 1994 because of reported trichloroethylene (TCE) contamination caused by accidental spills of the chemical on the company's property.

Soil and ground-water characterization work is currently underway by Lockformer to further evaluate the extent of soil and ground-water TCE contamination emanating from the areas where TCE is believed to have been spilled. This work is being overseen by IEPA and its consultants.

Late last year, IEPA detected TCE in private wells near the Lockformer plant. Lockformer said it was not responsible for the private well contamination. However, in January 2001, the Illinois Attorney General and DuPage County filed suit against Lockformer and Honeywell International, claiming that TCE was spilled on numerous occasions between 1970 and 1992 by a company delivering TCE to Lockformer, a company that is now owned by Honeywell International.

Through an agreement arranged by the court in January 2001, Lockformer agreed to supply bottled water to people with contaminated private wells, though the company admitted no responsibility for the contamination. The Lockformer Company is also supplying bottled water to a number of other homes where contamination has been found, though not required by the court agreement to do so.

What is Trichloroethylene?

Trichloroethylene (TCE) is a colorless liquid with a somewhat sweet odor and a sweet, burning taste. The primary use of TCE is to remove grease from fabricated metal parts and some textiles, and is also used in adhesives, paint removers, typewriter correction fluids, and spot removers. It is commonly found at hazardous waste sites as a result of inappropriate disposal practices.

Check out the following web sites for more information on TCE:

www.epa.gov/safewater/dwh/c-voc/trichlor.html

www.epa.gov/safewater/mcl.html

www.atsdr.cdc.gov/tfacts19.html

What are the possible health effects of TCE?

Individuals with TCE-contaminated wells are mainly exposed to TCE by drinking the water. However, since TCE can easily evaporate into the air, people may also inhale TCE vapors generated through the heating of TCE-contaminated water for bathing, dishwashing, and washing clothes.

In 1974, Congress passed the Safe Drinking Water Act, requiring U.S. EPA to determine safe levels of chemicals in drinking water. These levels are called maximum contaminant levels (MCLs), and are considered to be the lowest level to which water systems can reasonably be required to remove this contaminant in drinking water. The MCL of TCE is 5 parts per billion (ppb). Some people who are exposed to TCE in water in excess of the 5 ppb MCL standard over many years could experience liver or kidney damage, and may have an increased risk of cancer. Most of the water samples tested in the Lisle area were below the drinking water standard.

For More Information

For more information about the Lockformer cleanup, please contact:

Mike Joyce
Community Involvement Coordinator
Office of Public Affairs (P-19J)
U.S. EPA Region 5
77 W. Jackson Blvd.
Chicago, IL 60604-3590
Phone: (312) 353-5546 or (800) 621-8431 ext. 35546
Fax: (312) 353-1155
Email: joyce.mike@epa.gov

Steve Faryan
On-Scene Coordinator
Emergency Response Branch (SE-5J)
U.S. EPA Region 5
77 W. Jackson Blvd.
Chicago, IL 60604-3590
Phone: (312) 353-9351 or (800) 621-8431 ext. 39351
Fax: (312) 353-9176
Email: faryan.steven@epa.gov

Stan Black
Community Relations Coordinator
Illinois EPA
1021 N. Grand Avenue East
Springfield, IL 62794
Phone: (217) 785-1427
Fax: (217) 785-7725
Email: stan.black@epa.state.il.us

Stan Komperda
Project Manager
Illinois EPA
1021 N. Grand Avenue East
Springfield, IL 62794
Phone: (217) 782-5504
Fax: (217) 782-3258
Email: stan.komperda@epa.state.il.us

For health information contact:

Mark Johnson
Senior Regional Representative
Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSD-4J)
77 W. Jackson Blvd.
Chicago, IL 60604-3590
Phone: (312) 886-0840
Fax: (312) 886-6066
Email: johnson.mark@epa.gov

Ken Runkle
Division of Environmental Health
Illinois Department of Public Health
525 W. Jefferson
Springfield, IL 62761
Phone: (217) 782-5830
Fax: (217) 785-0253
Email: krunkle@idph.state.il.us

Reproduced on Recycled Paper

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Region 5
Office of Public Affairs (P-19J)
77 W. Jackson Blvd.
Chicago, IL 60604-3590

Official Business
Penalty for Private Use - $300